

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 05554 120149Z

62

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INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: VIEWS OF VENEZUELAN DEPUTY PERMREP DIAZ-GONZALEZ
ON PUERTO RICO

1. AT SOCIAL GATHERING DEC. 7, VENEZUELAN DEPUTY PERMREP LEONARDO DIAZ-GONZALEZ, CURRENTLY SERVING AS CHAIRMAN OF UNGA'S DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE, TOLD SMALL GROUP (INCLUDING OTHER LA PERMREPS AND MISOFF) THAT IN HIS VIEW PUERTO RICO DEFINITELY STILL US COLONY, COMMONWEALTH STATUS IS "FRAUD" DEvised BY USG, AND MUNOZ-MARIN "BE-TRAYED" PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE BY ACCEPTING COMMONWEALTH STATUS. CONTINUING ON SAME THEME, HE COMPARED ELECTIONS IN PUERTO RICO TO THOSE HELD IN VENEZUELA UNDER PEREZ-JIMENEZ REGIME, SINCE VOTES OF "GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES" WHO ARE RECIPIENTS OF OFFICIAL FAVORS DETERMINED THE OUTCOME IN VENEZUELA AND STILL DO IN PUERTO RICO. HE CLAIMED THAT MAJORITY OF PUERTO RICANS REALLY FAVOR INDEPENDENCE AND CITED TURNOUT OF 300,000 MARCHERS IN SAN JUAN EARLY THIS MONTH IN PUERTO RICAN'S SOCIALIST PARTY RALLY AGAINST NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MAYORS AS PROOF THAT INDEPENDENCE SENTIMENT STEADILY GROWING.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USUN N 05554 120149Z

2. MISOFF REMONSTRATED THAT ALL SHADES OF PUERTO RICAN

OPINION PARTICIPATED IN 1972 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION AND THAT VOTERS HAD IN VIRTUALLY ALL CASES REJECTED INDEPENDENCE CANDIDATES. DIAZ-GONZALEZ DISAGREED, CHARGING THAT ELECTIONS IN PUERTO RICO NOT FREE SINCE "AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATIVES OF PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE SUCH AS NATIONALIST LEADER ALBIZU CAMPOS" HAVE BEEN HARASSED AND IMPRISONED OVER THE YEARS. DIAZ-GONZALEZ CHARACTERIZED GOV. HERNANDEZ COLON, WHOM HE CLAIMED TO KNOW WELL (AS A RESULT OF ATTENDING INAUGURATION CEREMONY), AS REPRESENTING ONLY A SMALL GROUP OF WEALTHY PUERTO RICANS WHO "PROFIT" FROM A CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US. DIAZ-GONZALEZ ADDED THAT USG COULD CONVINCE UN DELEGATES SUCH AS HIMSELF THAT PUERTO RICO ELECTIONS REALLY "FREE" ONLY BY INVITING UN MISSION TO OBSERVE THEM.

3. CHANGING SUBJECT ABRUPTLY, DIAZ-GONZALEZ SAID THAT WHILE HE "NON-POLITICAL CAREER DIPLOMAT" HE IS ALSO GOOD FRIEND AND CLASSMATE OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE CARLOS ANDRES-PEREZ. HE SAID THAT IF PEREZ BECOMES VENEZUELA'S NEXT PRESIDENT, HE HAS VERY GOOD CHANCE OF REALIZING HIS "DREAM" - BEING APPOINTED VENEZUELA'S AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN (WHERE HE PREVIOUSLY SPENT 5 YEARS AS MINISTER).

4. COMMENT: SHOULD DIAZ-GONZALEZ BE APPOINTED TO TOKYO, JAPAN'S POSSIBLE GAIN WOULD HARDLY BE USUN'S LOSS. IF DIAZ-GONZALEZ REMAINS IN NEW YORK, HE IS CERTAIN TO CONTINUE AS VENEZUELA'S COMMITTEE OF 24 REPRESENTATIVE, WHERE HE WILL MOST LIKELY DO WHAT HE CAN TO ASSIST PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE SPOKESMEN WITHIN LATITUDES PERMITTED BY HIS INSTRUCTIONS. WE CONCERNED THAT HE MAY EVEN URGE NEW VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT POLICY ON PUERTO RICO MORE FAVORABLE TO INDEPENDENCE ADVOCATES AND HARMFUL TO OUR INTERESTS.

ACTION REQUESTED: THEREFORE, AS SOON AFTER INAUGURATION OF NEW GOV AS EMBASSY CARACAS DEEMS APPROPRIATE, WE RECOMMEND THAT EMBASSY CARACAS ONCE AGAIN RAISE WITH HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOV US OPPOSITION TO FURTHER UN INVOLVEMENT IN PUERTO RICO AND REQUEST VENEZUELAN SUPPORT FOR US AND PR GOVERNMENT POSITION IN COMMITTEE OF 24.

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PAGE 03 USUN N 05554 120149Z

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